

The Hillandale News



The official journal of the
**The City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society**
inaugurated 1919

NO. 71

FEBRUARY 1973

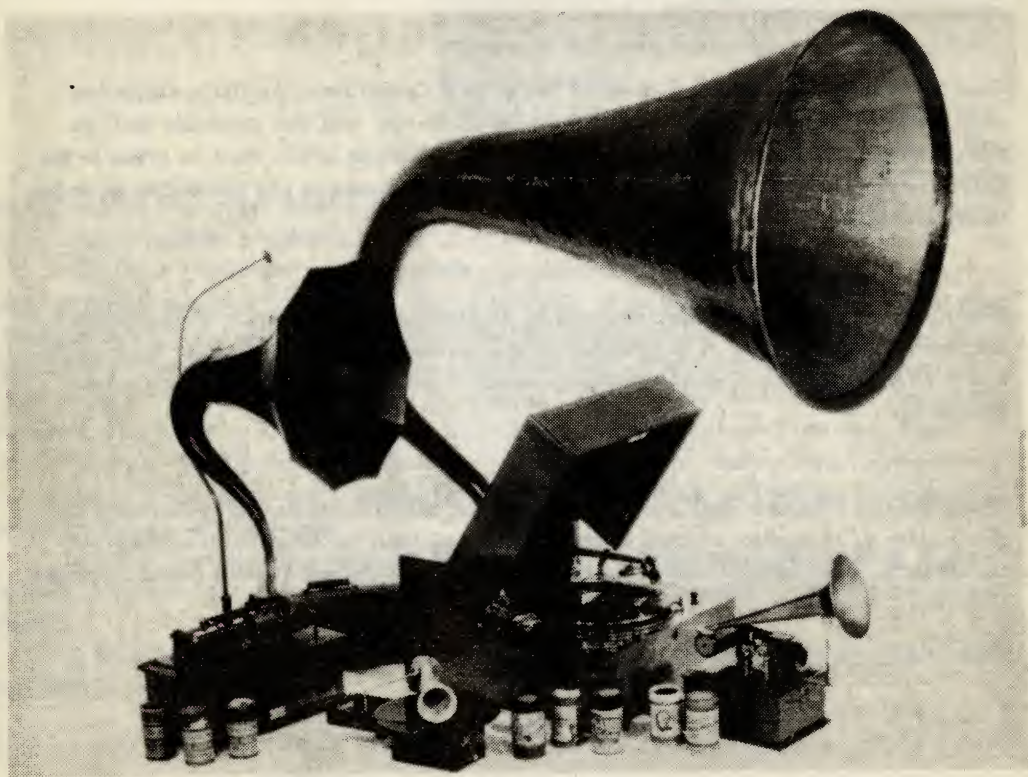


Photo of a few machines sold at Christies, Dec. 1972.

Rules of the Society

1. That the Society shall be called THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY, and that its objects shall be the social intercourse of its members, as well as the scientific and musical study of sound reproducing apparatus, as well as its application.
2. That the Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Financial Treasurer and Meeting Secretary, who shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting in October, and who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee.
3. That the management of the Society be vested in a Committee, similarly elected at each Annual General Meeting, and with power to co-opt, and that its duties shall be the carrying into effect of these rules and objects. Written notice must be given to the Secretary one clear month before an Annual General Meeting of any resolution proposing to amend these rules.
4. New members (ladies or gentlemen) may be elected on the nomination of any existing member, at any meeting of the Society on the payment of an annual subscription to be approved at the Annual General Meeting, which is renewable twelve calendar months thereafter.
5. The Financial Treasurer shall, once in every year, submit a statement of Accounts of the Society to an Auditor elected by the Society and shall furnish a Balance Sheet for the financial year ending October for the inspection of members at each Annual General Meeting.

* THE HILLANDALE NEWS *

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The Official Journal of
THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY
(Inaugurated 1919)

No. 71

FEBRUARY 1973

EDITORIAL

We are endeavouring to produce the "Hillandale News" more promptly in the New Year and hope that by the time this issue is printed, we shall be back to "normal" - by which we mean that you should receive your copy early in the month of issue. Our thanks are due to the main bulk of the members who have stood by us in the difficult period we have recently passed through, and we are pleased to inform you that membership is now rising steadily, with a healthy receipt of new enquiries about membership.

Have you thought about writing an article for the magazine? Do not hesitate if you have anything of interest: all we ask is that you write clearly and we will do the rest. We value in particular contributions from our senior members who remember buying early machines and records when they were on sale in the shops, and any tips they learned on the repair and adjustment of their machines.

There is a "mystique" about acoustic reproduction which seems to defy scientific theory on some occasions, such as the careful selection of diaphragm material, for instance. A batch of mica of the most suitable quality for the purpose would be further subjected to a "selection" test by ringing the sheets onto a hard surface. Those which did not produce a "ring" and fell with a soft "plop" would be rejected. Every small detail seems to count to obtain the ultimate from acoustic talking machines. Another tip is to keep some light grease or petroleum jelly smeared around any joints in the system between the reproducer or sound box and the horn, and to make sure that it is as "airtight" as possible, in order to avoid any losses in this direction.

It is now becoming increasingly difficult to find machines and early records, and so the main advice we can give is to explore every opening and do not give up too early in the "chase".

In conclusion, we would like to add our best wishes to you all in this New Year, and good luck in your collecting.

SOCIETY REPORTS FROM THE EARLY YEARS

Researched by Frank Andrews

THE FIRST YEAR OF OUR SOCIETY

1919 OCTOBER REPORT

At our October Meeting we were favoured with the presence of our newly elected President, Mr. Adrian Sykes, B.Sc., founder of the Talking Machine Society movement, who was given an enthusiastic welcome.

Mr. Miles is to be congratulated on a splendid programme, presented to an appreciative audience. The long looked for supplies from "over the water" having arrived, he took advantage of this to demonstrate titles not hitherto heard by the majority of members, and, in addition, several novelties from the collection of Mr. Meather, of the Liverpool Society, to whom we are indebted for the loan of these unique records. (There followed a list of records played. - Frank Andrews).

Two new members were enrolled, and our exchange scheme was taken full advantage of during the interval.

Mr. J.A. Dalpra will provide the fare at the next meeting and opera enthusiasts should attend in full force.

Particulars of the Society can be obtained from the undersigned at 27, Horsham Avenue, N.12.

J. W. Crawley.

(I have noticed that Mr. Hillyer, our Chairman during 1919, was also Hon. Financial Secretary of the North London Gramophone and Phonograph Society, the Society from which members formed the City of London Phonograph Society. - Frank Andrews).

1919 NOVEMBER REPORT

An enthusiastic audience gathered at H.Q. on Nov. 27th to hear Mr. A.J. Dalpra demonstrate a programme of judiciously blended operatic and popular "Blues" on an Edison Triumph enclosed top and Cygnet Horn.

The proceedings were begun by a dramatic surprise sprung on the Meeting by Mr. Hillyer who announced that Mr. Maskell's Spring Tension Reproducer, "borrowed" at a previous meeting, had been anonymously returned by post and remarked that it was very satisfactory to have got it back again, a sentiment heartily endorsed by the Members. It is to be hoped that this unorthodox method of "borrowing" will not be repeated.

For the first half of the programme the Tension Reproducer was used and for the second an Edison Model "B".

Six new members were enrolled during the interval.

We were pleased to welcome Mr. P.S. Smith of Edinburgh and Mr. H. Nicol of the Liverpool Society.

The next Meeting (Members' Night) will be on December 18th.

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

1919 DECEMBER REPORT

Our December Meeting, held on the 18th, was marked by a predominance of seasonal fare provided by various members and reproduced by Mr. Burrell on an Edison Home and metal Cygnet. Mr. Maskell provided the reproducer, the famous Spring Tensioned "B" which acted with great effect. Mr. Adrian Sykes presided.
(A list of records played followed. - Frank Andrews).

It was announced that Mr. J. E. Humphrey had won the prize for enrolling most new members and a similar prize was offered for 1920.

The following new members were elected, Messrs. Farley, Weatherley, Clarkson and Wright, bringing the membership to well over the half century.

The next meeting will be in the hands of Mr. Wilmott, who will introduce a copper horn of his own design. The meeting will be held, as usual, on the last Thursday of the month.
C. R. W. Miles.

1920 JANUARY REPORT

The January Meeting, held on Thursday the 29th, was in the hands of Mr. Wilmott, who demonstrated a Fireside with enclosed top and a copper Horn of an unusual design having a brass flare.

During the first half of the programme an Edison "B" repro' was used with a diaphragm made by Mr. Sharpe, and in the second, Mr. Bicken's brass (Model "B" type) repro' with a aluminium disphragm giving a wonderfully fine reproduction.

The sensation of the evening proved to be the reproduction of some splendid home-made piano records, made by Mr. Wilmott, with a parchment diaphragm recorder, a large recording horn and a Bechstein Grand.

The "Indian Love Lyrics" were wonderfully natural. All were reproduced with a copper diaphragm.

During the interval, an unusually long one, Mr. Crawley asked for subscribers for the new publication of that enterprising Society, The Liverpool Gramophone and Phonograph Society, named "The Sound Box". Twenty subscribers for one year (2/6d) were obtained.

A petition to the Edison Company was passed round to get the present unmusical recordings discontinued and to have more of the wax titles "Blued".

Four new members were enrolled.

The next meeting will be given by Mr. P. M. Ross who has a new kind of Horn to demonstrate.

J. W. Crawley.

1920 FEBRUARY REPORT

The Meeting held on Feb. 26th was devoted to Mr. P. M. Ross, who brought an Edison Home phonograph equipped with top cover (in this case lined with rubber) as favoured by many enthusiasts. To facilitate the motion of the carrier arm a small wheel had been added. The Horn resembled the Edison Cygnet but was built without the loose joint and was of thicker material, moreover, the portion below the bell was of square section. The reproducer was just an ordinary "B".

Unfortunately, derangement occurring in transit rendered the first portion of the varied and extensive programme provided open to criticism, but adjustment during the interval effected the desired improvement. (A list of recordings followed. - Frank Andrews).

Mr. Ross received a cordial vote of thanks for his efforts.

Mr. P.S. Smith, writing from Edinburgh, asked to be enrolled as a member, stating that the Society had helped him on more than one occasion. At the next meeting, on March 28th, we hope to have an Amberola, Mr. Crawley having volunteered to obtain one for the occasion, also some records from the Manchester Society's new arrivals. A.F.S.

1920 MARCH REPORT

Our March Meeting, held on the 25th inst., was in the hands of Mr. Saich who demonstrated a No. 50 Amberola in a programme of new and old recordings. The first seven in each half were borrowed from the Manchester Society, to whom our thanks are due for the opportunity to hear these truly dreadful productions! We beg to extend our sympathy to the Liverpool Society who are to hear the records at an early date!

In the discussion, it was suggested that sending the records back to Mr. Edison would be better than protests, but the adage about "looking gift horses in the mouth" was recalled.

Three new members were enrolled, Messrs. A. Slade, C. Oliver and C.E. Edwards.

The next meeting's programme will be given by Mr. A. Maskell who will use his Spring Tension Reproducer.

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

1920 APRIL REPORT

At the April Meeting, Mr. Maskell demonstrated a Home-made Spring Tension Diamond Reproducer and a Steel Cygnet Horn made by his brother-in-law.

After the interval a Wood Cygnet was used.

Mr. Maskell denied that his reproducer cut records up or wore them and demonstrated that it would ride over a faulty "Blue" where the Edison failed to do so. He announced the possible future production of a new Reproducer and a Steel Cygnet Horn to retail at £3.

A new member was enrolled during the evening.

(A list of records played followed. - Frank Andrews).

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

THIS ENDS THE REPORTS OF THE FIRST TWELVE MEETINGS.

I know it is possible to obtain reports, at least of all the meetings up to December, 1920.

Frank Andrews.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THEIR EXISTENCE, 1920 & 1921.

MAY 1920

Our May Meeting was a most successful one, over 100 enthusiasts attending to hear the Edison Cabinet Grand disc machine provided by the courtesy of Mr. F. Watts, of The London & Provincial Phonograph Co.

This was our first anniversary meeting and the reading of the balance sheet disclosed, as the Chairman remarked, the finest result yet achieved by any society in its first year, there being a balance of over £10 in hand. In view of their satisfactory working, the officers and committee were unanimously re-elected.

We were pleased to welcome as visitors the Presidents of The North London and The South London Societies, the Secretary of The East London Society, members of "The Talking Machine News" staff, "Pertinax" of "The Sound Wave", Mr. & Mrs. Boyd and Mr. Brown of Bristol.

The discs were received with mixed opinions. Some of them were very fine but the surfaces of some of the later pressings left a good deal to be desired, (no doubt due to wear conditions) and, for this reason, many cylinder members prefer their old love. The consensus of opinion does not tally with the eulogistic comments of the Tyneside Society.

Our next meeting will be a "Members' Night" and all are asked to bring their best Wax or Blue Amberol.

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

JUNE 1920

Our June Meeting was devoted to members' records. The demonstration took place on a "Fireside" enclosed top and an Opera Cygnet, kindly provided by Mr. F.W. Saich, who is going to give us a programme of suitable Blues on an "Amberola" in July.

(There follows a list of records played).

Mr. Harwood introduced a cygnet horn with a flare made from a "Music Master" gramophone horn. This was tried and found very satisfactory.

Three members were elected.

Particulars of the Society from Mr. J.W. Crawley, etc. etc.

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

JULY 1920

Our July Meeting was voted a great success by the enthusiasts who gathered to hear Mr. F.W. Saich demonstrate a No. 75 "Amberola". The reproduction from this machine is very dainty, especially suitable for the home, and the enthusiastic thanks given to the demonstrator at the close indicated the favourable opinion of members.

We enrolled our usual quota of new members, amongst them being Mr. de Carvalho, founder of the new Brixton Society, a new convert to the charm of the "Blues" (Amberols).

(There follows a list of records played).

Two "new" items were included, 3193 "A Walk in the Forest" by a Mandoline Orchestra and 3219 Homestead Trio, which only served to accentuate the beauty of the old recordings.

Our next meeting will be arranged by Mr. Crawley.

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

AUGUST 1920

At our August Meeting, Mr. Crawley gave the programme, operating Mr. Dalpra's

"Triumph" enclosed top and cygnet horn. A special reproducer was in use; a Model "B", with extra weight added, and a Sharp-Edison type diaphragm with metal link. The result was extremely fine, firm and forward.

An innovation was the giving, as far as was possible, a performance of the opera "Faust" by Gounod, and, with the aid of Columbia two and four-minute and Blue and Black Amberols, a fairly representative selection was given, the only drawback being that to give the selections as they occur in the opera a certain amount of repro' changing was necessary, which took up time.

The opera flavour to the programme was much appreciated and the Chairman, putting it to the vote, it was unanimously decided to endeavour to feature other operas in a similar manner in our future programmes.

We enrolled three new members and were pleased to welcome Mr. P. Howard, the energetic Secretary of The Manchester Edison Society, who, in a short speech, congratulated our members on being faithful to the good old Blue Amberols after the difficult times we had passed through. He said he had heard advance copies of the September "Blues" and was glad to be able to announce that at least four were direct recordings. He attributed this in a small degree to the petitions sent to Mr. Edison by the joint Societies.

(There followed a list of the "Faust" recordings).

Mr. Miles observed that the Ballet Music from "Faust" was specially written for the Parisian production and Valentine's Prayer was specially written for Sir Charles Santley, for the English production.

Mr. Biekens introduced his own make Model "B" reproducer, made entirely of brass with a diaphragm of wood varnished over, which gave a nice mellow tone and was very favourably commented upon.

C. R. W. Miles.

SEPTEMBER 1920

The September Meeting was in the hands of Mr. Miles but, owing to a stroke of ill-luck, his machine broke down after playing the following selection. (A list of 9 records followed).

The remainder of the evening was therefore devoted to a friendly "conflab".

It has been decided that the Society shall start a Lending Library of Blue Amberols. Every member present agreed to present at least one record and it is hoped that a fine collection will soon be available for loan.

Mr. Carvalho has enthusiastically undertaken the onerous duties of Librarian and members, wishing to join, should send their record contributions to him at 25, Crewsdon Rd. Brixton Rd. S.W. 9. or bring them along to the next meeting, which will be a "Members' Night".

J. W. Crawley, Hon. Secretary, 27 Horsham Ave. N.12.

OCTOBER 1920

The October Meeting was held on Oct. 28th, at the Society's Headquarters. Owing to the unfortunate absence of Mr. Hillyer, who was indisposed, the Chair was taken by Mr. J.A.S. Andrews.

A well attended meeting listened with much interest and enjoyment to an impromptu programme, the occasion being a "Members' Night".

A "Fireside" machine, with a mahogany cygnet horn and an Edison "B" repro', was used throughout the evening, the Society being indebted to Mr. Saich for the loan of the instrument. The records submitted were varied in character, all musical tastes being respected.

(There followed a list of records played).

A goodly number of records was handed to our Librarian and, next month, we hope to see this feature in full operation.

The next meeting's programme will be provided by Mr. Biekens.

H. F. V. Little.

NOVEMBER 1920

Our November Meeting was a great success. Mr. Biekens demonstrated an Edison "Home" enclosed top, wood cygnet, and his own brass "B" type repro' with walnut wood diaphragm. The result was extremely musical and refined, especially on the orchestral pieces.

An infant-in-arms occasionally signified approval of various items, the majority of which were new to members. (There followed a list of records which were played).

We enrolled three new members, Messrs. Burling, Rootes and Ivory, and Mr. Carvalho did good business with the Record Library.

A most remarkable joke record from the Edison Laboratory was brought by Mr. Saich, a Collins and Harlan duet pressed on top of the Stradella Overture! The band finally drowned the singers - a truly humorous record! This record was purchased for the Library and will be in great demand.

Our next meeting will be devoted to a programme given by Mr. Thomas who will demonstrate his "Triumph" machine.

C. R. W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

DECEMBER 1920

At our December meeting, Mr. Thomas, operating a "Triumph" with enclosed top and small cygnet, planned a programme of 36 items but time did not allow the playing of more than 26.

Mr. Howlett, in the absence of Mr. Carvalho, did some Lending Library business. There was a good attendance.

The next meeting's programme will be given by Mr. Miles and Mr. Saich with an "Amberola" fitted with cygnet horn.

(There followed a list of records played).

C. R. W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

JANUARY 1921

The Society will shortly enter on its third year of "Triumph". Since its inception, members have shown, in a remarkable manner, their enthusiasm for the "Blues" and those sceptical ones, who think the cylinder is a thing of the past, would have a rude awakening

had they attended our meeting on January 27th, when Mr. Saich operated his No. 50 "Amberola", with cygnet horn attached. No particular advantage could be claimed for the horn except perhaps its extra volume.

Before the interval it was a case of "Standing Room Only".

(There followed a list of records played).

At the usual interval, (always a feature of our meetings), four new members were enrolled.

The Librarian called for further donations to the Library. Any member who would like to contribute, he will be glad to interview at the next meeting, which will be in the hands of Mr. Ross, who will endeavour to bring along his large No. 1 "Amberola".

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Saich for his trouble in providing such an enjoyable programme.

E.H. Thomas.

FEBRUARY 1921

At our February meeting, Mr. Phil Ross was heartily congratulated for his excellent demonstration of the following records. (A list followed).

We are still in need of more enthusiasts to join our Records Library; applicants will be welcomed by the Librarian.

The next meeting will be a "Members' Night" at which we hope to try a little "home recording", for which purpose, Mr. Bullock has undertaken to bring along a "Triumph" machine. All interested are invited to come along.

(Regarding the last sentence, it should be realised that the Society at this time did not have its own magazine, reports of meetings were published in "The Talking Machine News" and "Sound News", and it was to the readers of these magazines that the last sentence in the above report was directed. - Frank Andrews).

C.R.W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

MARCH 1921

Our March Meeting was one of the most interesting we have held, up to the present moment. Mr. Bullock transported a "Triumph" with wooden and metal cygnets and demonstrated the following records. (A list was published).

After the interval, 4 minute cylinder recordings took place.

The first record, started off by Mr. Miles, was chiefly remarkable for Mr. Hillyer's frantic appeals for someone to come and say something! Finally, Mr. Bullock and Mr. Crawley obliged and the resulting record reproduced in a most life-like manner.

After the "ball had been rolling", Mr. Hillyer, on a second cylinder, announced that Mr. Woodman would sing a song, who was followed by Mr. Carvalho, Mrs. Crawley, Mr. de Toro, Mr. Hillyer and Mr. Crawley, in songs and dialect.

This innovation was very popular and it was decided to have another "Recording Night", in June, with piano and other instruments.

A 2 minute record, which Mr. Miles had specially recorded previously on the Edmonton Telephonograph, was very clear. This record also contained a message of Goodwill

from Mr. Lloyd Thomas. (Mr. Thomas was a Gramophone Dealer, who had premises at Hornsey, London during the Great War and was one of the very few dealers to advertise "Jumbo Records" for sale!! - Frank Andrews).

Blue Amberol No. 4216 "Sparklets", played by Conway's Band, was afterwards played. This record showed a marked improvement over recent Blue Amberols. The opinion was expressed that a new method of recording had been adopted. If future issues are up to this standard we shall be very pleased.

The next meeting will be devoted to an "Amberola" VIII night, the records being provided by Messrs. Crawley and Miles.

C. R. W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

APRIL 1921

Our April Meeting was in the hands of Mr. Crawley and the writer and the following records were demonstrated. (A list was published).

There is a slight improvement in some of the new recordings but the old style, such as re-issues of "Semper Fidelis" and "Manilla", still get the most applause.

The next meeting is our Annual General Meeting to be followed by a Members' Programme, Mr. Burnell providing an "Amberola".

C. R. W. Miles, Recording Secretary.

Mr. Saich, often mentioned in these reports, was a Gramophone Dealer, who moved to new premises at Stoke Newington, London, in March, 1921.

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES No. 58

by Tyn Phoil

Edison Blue Amberol No. 2272.

"An Afternoon in June" sung by Billy Murray, with whistling by Joe Belmont, and Orchestra.

"While strolling out one afternoon in June,
Birds were singing everywhere".

This is an unusual, and interesting record.

The words of the two verses, sung by Billy Murray, were written by Joe Belmont. The pretty waltz, which the orchestra plays after the whistling chorus, is called the "Happy Birds Waltz", and was composed by E. Holst, a well known composer of light music. The whistling cadenzas by Joe Belmont are, of course, his own.

With the combination of Billy Murray singing, Joe Belmont whistling, and backed by E. Holst's delightful orchestration, makes this a very attractive record.

IVOR LLEWELLYN FOSTER (Baritone)

Born Pontypridd (Glamorgan) 1870, died Bridgend 1959. Trained at Royal College of Music for four years under Henry Blower and Charles Stanford.

Won the Baritone competition at the National Eisteddfod, Caernarvon, in 1894. Created the role of Don Pedro in Stanford's "Much Ado About Nothing" at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

His daughter, Megan, made her debut as a singer, in 1920.

MARIA GAY (Contralto)

Born Barcelona, June 13, 1879, died New York, July 29, 1943.

She taught herself to sing, and in 1902 appeared in a concert with Pugno, and Ysaye, and was then engaged to sing the role of Carmen at La Monnaie.

Studies with Madame Adiny in Paris, afterwards appearing with great success in Europe and America. In 1913 she married Giovanni Zenatello. Made her Metropolitan debut on December 8, 1908, as Carmen, under the direction of Toscanini. After retiring from the stage, she settled as a teacher in New York. She and her husband were credited with having discovered Lily Pons.

HENRY GEEHL (Pianist, Conductor, Composer)

Born London, September 28, 1881).

First a pianist, but later devoted himself to conducting, and composition.

Has composed, and arranged, several works and songs, probably his most celebrated song being "For You Alone".

Compiler's Note:

A few years ago, George Blacker, in America, was kind enough to send me a marvellous recording of this famous song, sung by John Young, on a U.S. everlasting cylinder.

The photographs on the cover and on page 11 show machines sold at Christies on the 13th Dec. 1972, together with various lots of cylinders. The sale seemed well attended by members of our Society from different parts of the country, and by the comments made by most members after the sale, proved that prices have gone from what was once high - to the ridiculous. However, I must report that the cylinders went at the reasonable price of 50 pence each for all types from ballads, music hall, jazz to opera.



More Machines sold at Christies.

LONDON MEETING - DECEMBER 9th, 1972.

George Frow entitled his programme, "Edison for Christmas", which consisted of four minute Blue Amberols and one Diamond Disc. Several cylinders were transfers from the original discs, and the quality of sound was noticeably inferior.

As the title of the programme suggests, nearly all the recordings were of Festive flavour. Opening with the Kinderlieder March (26042) played by the John Strauss Band, we proceeded to "When the red, red Robin comes bob, bob, bobbing along" (5208) played by the Golden Gate Orchestra. "Christmas Eve" (3036) played on the Celeste by R. Gayler, brought many well known carols to the listeners, many members recognising other uses they were put to. Harry H. Humphrey - whose voice is well known for the instructive pieces placed on the back of Diamond Discs and Vocalions, recited "The Night before Christmas" (2464). "Santa Claus Song" - sung and yodelled by George Watson (3034) was considered by members to be an interesting combination, and as transferred from disc, sounded at the beginning more like an aeroplane. "Santa Claus hides in your phonograph", brought some laughs, Harry H. Humphrey at his best (4635). "Nazareth" sung by Peter Dawson, was very forward on 23147. The programme concluded with "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" sung by the Steidl quartet. In all some twenty cylinders entertained us. Those which I have not mentioned included Billy Williams, Bransbury Williams, Alexander Prince and Jack Charman.

Je sais tout

LE THÉÂTRE CHEZ SOI

ÉTABLISSEMENTS PHONOGRAPHIQUES D'IVRY
C. G. E.

(Capital : 18 Millions de Francs)

MACHINES PARLANTES ET
DISQUES A SAPHIR INUSABLE

== "ASPIR" ==

DISQUES :

ASPIR "BÉBÉ"

23 centimètres — Double face

Prix : **2 francs**

ASPIR "IDÉAL"

30 centimètres — Double face

Prix : **3 fr. 75**

ASPIR "RECORD"

36 centimètres — Double face

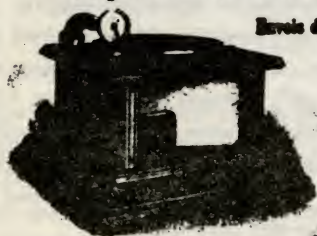
Prix : **5 francs**



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George Frow interspersed between the recordings, with general notes. Other interesting information came from members' comments. An ordinary stereo cartridge suspended on a system devised by Len Watts gave excellent results, and its simplicity should tempt other members to construct their own.

Before the interval George Frow explained a booklet he had received as a sample from the Edison Foundation, and which the Society soon hopes to be able to offer to members. Included with the booklet is a flimsy 7" disc recorded at $33\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. Between the announcer's voice are heard the voices of Edison, Shackleton and others transferred from cylinders. It is unfortunate that the cylinder transfers are so crude in sound quality. However, overall, the article is well presented and recommended by the Society.

After the interval, George Woolford played a tape of Melvin Harris's recent B. B. C. broadcast, featuring the Bassoon, Cornet, Trombone, Trumpet, Ocarina, and the Clarinet. The Society compliments Mr. Harris for the excellent programme and fine examples of virtuosity played.

Details of discs and cylinders played were:-

- "The Post Horn Galop" - unknown - Cornet. Disc.
- Variations on "Du, Du" - J. Levey - Cornet. 7" Berliner.
- "Stars in a velvety sky" - H. L. Clarke - Cornet. 1910 Disc.
- "Columbia Fantasia" - B. Krill - Cornet. 1906 Edison Cylinder.
- "Silver Threads amongst the Gold" - J. Solomon - Slide Trumpet. Disc 1910.
- "Cujus Animam" - Arthur Pryor - Slide Trombone. 1908 Disc.
- Unknown Item - William Conrad-Bohem - Bassoon. 1910 Disc.
- "Lucy Long" - Hinchcliffe - French Boofe Bassoon. Disc.
- "Carnival of Venice" - Moisey Tapperio - Ocarina. 1912 Disc.
- "Rigoletto Fantasia" - Oscar Schmidt - Clarinet. 1926 Disc.

The discs played were very well reproduced, only cylinders giving inferior reproduction.

* * * * *

HOW TO SING A SONG

by MADAME CLARA BUTT

To deal, in the shape of an article, with the question of how to sing a song is a very difficult and very intricate matter which involves touching upon a variety of points that might not at first sight be associated with the subject. Four distinct factors play prominent parts in the singing of any song, however simple. These are the Voice, the Singer, the Master, and the Song.

Of these, of course, the voice is of primary importance; for unless an individual possesses in some degree the gift of song it is impossible for him or for her to become a singer. In very many cases, needless to say, correct training, by showing how the vocal organs can be used to the best advantage, may achieve some sort of result. But the voice so produced is often of an artificial character, which can never approach the purely "natural" voice.

It is, I believe, held by a great many people that only those can sing who possess a throat and vocal organs suitable for the production of the voice, but my own views on the subject do not coincide with this idea at all. My point of view is that if you are meant to be a singer you will sing. "God sent His singers upon earth", etc.

One often hears of operations upon the throat being performed with the object of improving the voice, but here again I find myself in entire disagreement. I think that if one is born with a deformity of the throat, and has always sung easily with it, any attempt to interfere with, or alter, that deformity, may end in destroying the power of song altogether.

When I was at the Royal College of Music I was constantly being urged to have my tonsils cut. For a long time I held out against it, but at last consented. However, while I was actually seated in the operating chair, the doctor asked me to sing the vowel sound "E" on a high note, and remarked upon the way my tonsils contracted while I sang it. All at once I recalled the case of a girl I knew, with a true soprano voice, who had lost the ability to sing in tune after her tonsils had been cut. Might it not be the same in my own case? This decided me in an instant. I refused to let the operation be performed, and from that day to this have never allowed my throat to be interfered with surgically in any way. Yet I have had every sort of throat that a singer would wish to avoid without my voice being affected in the least! I started life, almost, with diphtheria, have suffered from adenoids, and have experienced several attacks of quinsy. Among myself and my three sisters, all of us being singers, my throat is the worst of the lot, and not in the least like a singer's throat. The sister whose voice most nearly resembles mine is the one whose throat is most like mine; and the sister who has a throat and vocal organs which are ideal from an anatomical point of view possesses a soprano voice which, though particularly sweet, is not strong!

One thing that I think exercises an enormous amount of influence upon the quality of voices is climate. Review the climatic conditions of the various countries, and you cannot help remarking upon the number of natural voices that are met with in Italy and in Australia, in both of which countries the climate is unusually fine. I believe that the brilliance of the Australian climate must be reckoned with very seriously in accounting for the peculiar brilliance which is a characteristic of Australian singing voices, while that Italy is a country of singers is well known to everybody. At the same time, climatic conditions do not seem to affect the speaking voice, which I imagine is more a question of language. I have always thought that the English speaking voice is the best of any. There is none of that nasal, sonorous accent about it which, for instance, makes the speaking voice of the ordinary Italian so unpleasant. I was never so struck with this quality in Italian speaking voices as upon one occasion when staying at an hotel in Venice where there was a cafe almost beneath our windows. Even the beauties of Venice hardly compensated for the nerve-racking nasal chatter that continually floated up to us from below.

It goes without saying that the voice needs a great deal of training and care if it is to be brought to the best development, and one of the first faults that must be cured is in the taking, and use of the breath. This must be done in an entirely different way from that usually employed when speaking. It would be impossible for me to deal fully in such an article as this with the question of how to take breath, and as it is one of the first lessons

that a singing master should teach, I will confine myself here to saying that the main difference lies in the fact that, when speaking, the breath is usually taken from the chest, but that when singing it must be controlled by the abdominal muscles.

When singing, the muscles of the throat must be relaxed, and not contracted. Self-consciousness often does more to mar a good voice than anything else, since it leads to the contraction of the muscles. Have you never noticed how pleasantly some people sing or hum to themselves when they imagine they are not overheard, compared with the indifferent or even unpleasant manner in which they perform publicly? Here we have a direct example of the result of self-consciousness. Never mind your audience. Allow the song to carry you away, so that you sing easily and naturally.

To acquire perfect control over the throat muscles, so that they may be relaxed at will, is one of the most difficult points in voice training. And one of the most common mistakes made in this respect is in over-practice. The muscles of the throat are among the most delicate of the whole body, and I am convinced that it is a fatal error to overtax them, especially during the early training of the voice, by too much practice. Personally, my training was very gradual, and the greatest care was taken not to impose too much strain upon my throat at first. I am confident that a number of short practices of ten or fifteen minutes' duration, with intervals of rest between, are better than a few long periods, since the throat is thus less liable to become tired. Every expert in physical development will tell you that for the proper development of any set of muscles a gradual exercise that does not involve over-exertion is the best, and I would particularly emphasise the importance of this where the throat is concerned.

Another point in connection with the voice which is too often overlooked is the question of general health. My gardener sometimes complains that the flowers do not come to perfection owing to the pooriness of the soil. The simile is a very good one. The vocal organs are like delicate flowers, capable of the best development when the soil in which they are planted - the body - is in perfect condition. It must be the object of all singers, therefore, to take the greatest care of their health.

Over-exercise of the body generally should also be avoided, just as much as over-exercising the throat. It is easier to sing when the rest of the body has not been over-tired. General exercise, though essential to health, can be overdone just as much as vocal exercise. These remarks apply particularly to the student. It is while the voice is being formed, more than after it has been formed, that it is likely to be affected by such considerations as those just mentioned.

The mind plays a prominent part where the voice is concerned. Worry, unhappiness, and mental strain of every description may lower the whole tone of the body, and, by lessening the inclination to sing, make singing more difficult. Unfortunately one cannot take mental worries in small doses, but must put up with them as they come; and I only mention this to impress upon my readers the more forcibly how important the general health of mind and body is where the voice is concerned.

After all, the effect of mental or bodily strain upon the voice depends entirely upon the individual. Personally, whatever may be the state of my mind or my body, I am able

to sing in a sort of subconscious state.

It would hardly be possible to hit upon a more striking illustration of what can be done when one is in a subconscious condition than what I am about to relate.

At one time and another I have had to have operations performed - for appendicitis, for instance - which have necessitated my being put under ether. On every single occasion I have sung in full voice while under the influence of the anaesthetic! This was most remarkable perhaps on the occasion when I was being operated upon for appendicitis, for then the abdominal muscles, which control one's breathing, must naturally have been interfered with.

My husband will probably always recall another occasion of this kind as one of the most unpleasant experiences he has ever had. He was anxiously awaiting in another room the verdict of the doctor - the operation being a serious one, and my life being actually in danger - and was horrified, at a time when he knew a crisis must have been reached, to hear me suddenly burst out into song - a song he did not know, but all who heard it say it was sacred in character, very melodious, and that I sang in full voice! I can well imagine what a nerve-racking experience this must have been for him in the circumstances.

The fact is that trouble, worry, and ill-health have no effect upon the voice itself. The voice is always there. It is only the power of using it that may be impaired.

Yet another exceedingly interesting piece of evidence on this point is worth recording. Most of my readers will recall the name of Madame Etelka Gerster. Madame Gerster was one of those great sopranos of whom the world has only known a few. She came before the public about the same time as Madame Patti, and created such a sensation that the then Emperor William commanded her to sing for him - a command which necessitated her making a special journey to Germany.

One night when Madame Gerster was singing as the "star" in opera in New York her vocal chords suddenly became paralysed. She never sang again in public, yet there is to be found in her case further evidence of the fact that it is not the voice that suffers, but merely the ability to use it.

I used - I am speaking of some considerable time after this event - to stay with Madame Gerster in Italy, and now and then had evidence of the fact that the power of using her voice was temporarily restored to her. I have known her sing for a whole evening. Those were wonderful moments which I shall never forget. It was like listening to some beautiful bird, or rather thousands of birds!

So you see her voice was there just the same, and was not itself in the least affected by her having lost the power to use it, a great sorrow coming into her life being the cause of this.

As I have already pointed out, it is in the early stages of vocal training that the effects of ill-health, mental worry, or overwork are most likely to be felt. When the voice has been properly trained, and the vocal organs fully developed, they are less likely to suffer by the rest of the body being out of tune, and it is therefore of particular importance for beginners to bear my remarks in mind.

Here is another point which beginners should take to heart, and follow as far as they are able. Try to avoid over-anxiety. Students often make the mistake, through over-anxiety,

of over-working their voices just before a concert, with the result that they are not at their best when on the platform. It is a good plan to rest both the body and the voice before singing in public.

I should like to emphasise the importance of this very fully. Young singers seem to lose sight, half the time, of the fact that they should be at their very best when on the platform. Personally I always keep, and have always kept, this clearly before my mind. It is the greatest possible mistake to waste your efforts at the last moment in private. Rest before you sing in public, in order that when you go on to the platform you may give your audience - who, after all, have paid to be entertained - of your best. Remember that while polishing is highly desirable, there is such a thing as over-polishing, and this, instead of improving, only wears out. I am a great believer in the quiet study of a song without the aid of a piano. Not only does this avoid tiring the voice, but it enables the singer to fully grasp all the beauty and the meaning of the words and the music, and so to enter into the spirit of the subject when upon the platform. When on tour I frequently adopt this method of studying. It enables one to be doing something useful when in the train, or elsewhere, when actual practice is undesirable or impracticable.

This resting of the voice before singing in public applies not only to vocal exercises, but to all kinds of over-exertion of the throat. Even those who are aware of the danger, and who are careful to refrain from singing-practice just before an appearance in public, very frequently forget that speaking may tire the voice every whit as much as singing. It is most important not to do too much talking for some hours before a public appearance is made. In this way the throat will be thoroughly rested.

In singing, as in everything else, experience teaches, better than any amount of instruction, what an individual is capable of, and how the full power and merit of the voice may best be acquired and preserved. When students have "found their feet" sufficiently to understand the best way to manage their voices, they will be able to regulate their practice according to what leads to the best result in each individual case. Some may be best suited by morning practice, others by afternoon practice. Personally, I put in most of my practice between the hours of eleven and one each morning.

The next factor to be considered is the Singer. Temperament, individuality, force, dramatic ability, perseverance, industry, keenness, and ambition all play a part in the making of a successful singer and in the singing of a song successfully. It is in the earlier stages of the singer's career that some of these qualities are most necessary for many years of hard and constant study have sometimes to be faced. It is during this time that perseverance, industry, keenness, and ambition, if they are possessed, will help the student on so enormously; indeed, while ambition and keenness will do most perhaps in the early stages, industry and perseverance are required all the time, for it is impossible to reach a stage where there is nothing left to learn.

Singing is but one branch of art, and a singer can learn something from every other branch. From the Actor may be gleaned hints for dramatic effect; from the Painter may be acquired an appreciation of breadth and colour; from the Orator may be picked up many

useful hints as regards enunciation, modulation, and emphasis; while the Writer may inspire those beautiful thoughts which, taking root in the singer's mind, help towards that mental health which is as important to the perfect voice as physical fitness. It will be seen, therefore, that one may never have done studying; for there are constantly new actors, new speakers, new painters, or new writers from whom something may be learnt, while in painting and literature alone there are great masterpieces to such number that no one singer could ever hope to study them all. It must be remembered, also, that what satisfied the public ten years ago does not satisfy them now, and as a singer must keep pace with every advancement that is made, there is constant study to be done.

The first thing the possessor of a voice looks out for is naturally some one to train it, and this brings us to the question of the master. It is not my intention to give advice as to the selection of master or masters; indeed it would be impossible to do so, partly because there are so many masters between whom it would be invidious to make comparisons, and partly because such an article as this is intended more to assist the general run of students, who are spread over so large an area that they could not all reach the best-known masters, but are obliged to study locally. In England and in the Colonies there are many very good schools and colleges for vocal training, and there are competent teachers, most of them emanating from our great Colleges and Academies, within reach of almost every district. While I do not wish to appear unpatriotic, however, it must frankly be admitted that students must study on the Continent if the best results are to be achieved, since only on the Continent can they study in that "Musical Atmosphere" which is so essential a surrounding for one who essays an artistic career. Even if prolonged study on the Continent is out of the question, it is advisable, at all costs, for Continental musical centres to be visited. No musical education can otherwise be complete.

You must not think that I wish to run down English masters. Quite the contrary: I think you can get just as good masters here as abroad. It is simply the question of "Atmosphere" - surroundings. There is no city in England where the pupil can study amid such surroundings that music and artistic ideas and ideals hem him in on every side, so that they meet him whichever way he turns, and so that the feeling that music is the only thing in the world remains with him, waking and sleeping, during the whole period of his study.

Only when surrounded by such an Atmosphere can the student be properly developed where his musical ideas are concerned, for only these surroundings can develop that artistic temperament which is so essential.

And apart from the question of Musical Atmosphere, seeing that a singer is frequently called upon to render songs in French, German, and Italian, it is necessary that those languages should be studied in France, Germany, and Italy, if perfection is to be acquired.

It is a very grave fault of our musical colleges and academies that they employ, as a rule, English teachers to give instruction in foreign languages. If in one's student days one had a good master for these languages - a Frenchman to teach French, a German to teach German, and so on - it would be of the greatest possible assistance, and would save a considerable amount of time and labour, since so much less would have to be unlearned. It is not too much to say, I think, that our musical institutions will never reach the highest point of their utility till they do this.

But before learning to sing in foreign languages at all, it is essential that pupils should learn to sing in their own language. Masters in this country teach their pupils to sing passably in French, Italian, and German, but directly they attempt to sing in English one is horrified to find that their enunciation is so bad that it is impossible to understand the words they sing, and almost out of the question to tell what language they are singing in! Surely it should be the first object of the teacher to instruct his pupils in the singing of their own language.

I verily believe that the reason why our language is looked down upon for singing in is because so many of our native singers do not know how to sing it properly. There are much harder sounds in the German language, for instance. Yet German songs are constantly sung by singers of every nationality. How often does one hear of English songs being sung in France, Germany, or Italy by French, German, and Italian singers? Even when they give recitals over here their programmes seldom include an English song, and one is even more struck by so many of our own vocalists giving recitals at which often not a single song in English is included!

When English is properly sung, it is as easy to sing in, and as beautiful to listen to, as any other language, and if students were taught how to sing it, its popularity among singers would, I feel convinced, quickly spread.

I remember very well indeed singing on one occasion to Madame Marchesi in Paris. I boldly chose an English song, and upon coming to the end of it, was much pleased by the tribute Madame Marchesi paid to our language when she said to me, "English is beautiful when sung like that!"

It should emphatically be the first duty of a master to teach his pupils how to use their native language, and no other should be attempted till they can do this perfectly. The slipshod methods so frequently met with now would then soon disappear, and I am sure it would not be long before other countries began to appreciate the many beauties of the English language for singing in, and we should get more songs written by good composers to some of our beautiful English poetry.

Before I leave this question of the master there is one other point for me to touch upon. Although, when once they have mastered the singing of their own language, pupils should seek the Musical Atmosphere of the Continent, it must be remembered that there is one branch of music which is peculiarly our own, and which must accordingly be studied here. I refer to Oratorio. England is the home of Oratorio, and consequently this style of singing cannot be studied abroad. And for any singer who looks forward to entering the musical profession, careful study of this branch is absolutely indispensable. Oratorio is very popular here, and English audiences will not for a moment tolerate singers who fail to acquit themselves well when they undertake it; and as most professionals have to do Oratorio work at one time or another, care must be taken that the public are not given renderings which fail through lack of proper study and application.

Oratorio entails much study and research that is unnecessary where other branches of singing are concerned. Not only must the whole work be studied so that the singer may become acquainted with the full intention of the composer, but a special study must be made

of the character which the singer is to perform, in order that all the feelings and emotions he or she would have felt in real life may be properly understood before an attempt is made to reproduce them. If the best results are to be achieved, the life, habits, failings, aims, and ambitions of the character to be interpreted must, as far as possible, be carefully studied and thought about, in order that the singer may better appreciate the situations which occur, and know how the character portrayed would have felt and acted in them. The Bible throws considerable light upon the life and character of most of the personages who have a place in Oratorio, and it is therefore useful, when studying some particular work, to examine carefully that portion of the Bible which may throw light upon the subject.

Lastly we come to the song, and this is a question upon which I hold very decided views. The object of singers should be to give the greatest amount of pleasure to their audiences, as well as to use all that is best and highest in their art to inspire good thoughts, and raise the mental standard of their hearers. The larger proportion of every audience can only follow the words of the song in English. They can fully appreciate the beauty of the music, I admit, and for this reason every artist should have some of the most beautiful songs of other countries in his or her repertoire, but it is a lamentable fact that good translations are very rare. I like to choose as many songs as possible in English, so that their meaning and their message can be readily understood and appreciated by my audience.

I believe that it is within the power of an artist to actually lessen, or, at any rate, to temporarily relieve, the cares and worries of which each member of an audience has a share; and I am sure that the easiest way to do so is to sing songs whose meaning, and whose message, is immediately understandable.

In conclusion, I cannot insist too strongly upon the necessity for hard work and perseverance for those who are to succeed in the world of music. To many people imagine that the "gift" is everything. But indeed this is not the case, for though the "gift" is of course indispensable, much application and hard work are necessary before it can be made use of to the best advantage. Given a voice and some dramatic instinct, there still remains careful and laborious training to be gone through before a singer can know how to sing a song and be able to put that knowledge into practice. The great thing is to be sincere, to be individual, and to grasp at the beginning of one's career the impossibility of pleasing everybody, and the necessity of being true to oneself, and if others see the truth differently, be deferential, and not servile, to their alien point of view.



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THE STORY OF THE PHONOGRAPH

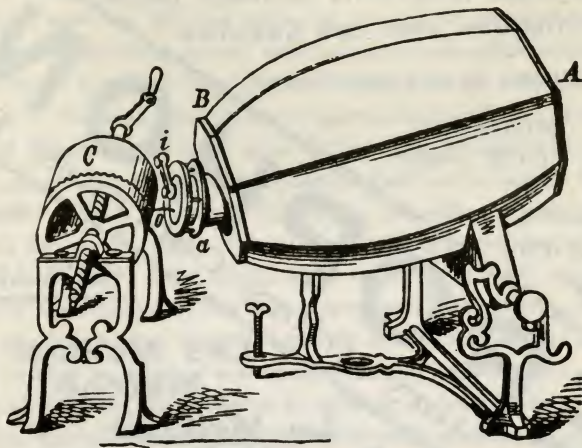
Sent by Ray Phillips

from The Boys' Book of Inventions

Making Pictures of Sounds and Sounds of Pictures.

This is the wonder of the phonograph: it is a machine which makes pictures of sounds, and then, at will, changes these pictures back into sounds again. A picture of a matchless solo by Melba is made in Paris on a little wax cylinder; the cylinder is sent through the mails to New York like any other picture, here to be transformed again into the voice of Melba, repeating all the sweetness and richness of the original tones. The voice of Nicolini, preserved in pictures, still sings, although the singer himself is dead. And this is something hard to realize, even at this day when the phonograph has become almost as familiar as the sewing-machine.

Every man has in his throat a delicate membrane which is set to quivering every time he speaks. The vibrations thus produced in turn set the air to quivering, and these waves roll through space, very much like the waves on the seashore, until they strike on the drum or membrane of the ear. That is the way we hear; it is nature's telephone. If the vibrations are rapid we say that the voice is high; if slow, we say that it is deep. Each note has its own different vibrations.



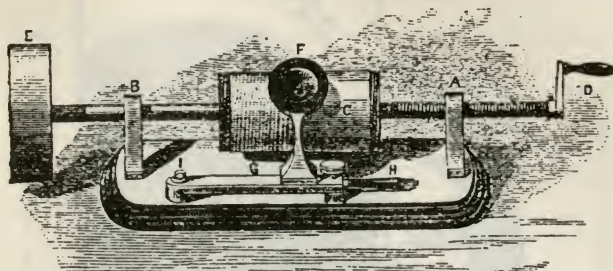
SCOTT'S PHONAUTOGRAPH.

The first suggestion of a talking machine, in which the sound pictures were scratched on a cylinder covered with lampblack, by means of a hog's bristle.

Away back in 1857 Leon Scott, knowing these simple facts in physics, conceived the idea of making sounds produce pictures. It was an idea as original as it was bold. In the experiments which followed, Scott constructed a curious little device called the Phonautograph, which vividly foreshadowed a part of the operation of the phonograph. It consisted of a thin membrane - a bit of bladder - stretched tightly over a barrel-shaped frame. In the center of this membrane a stiff hog's bristle was firmly fastened. On speaking with the lips close to the outer end of the frame the membrane vibrated in accordance with the sound waves thus produced, the bristle moved back and forth and scratched a continuous wavy track on a revolving cylinder which had been well daubed with lampblack. This wavy line was an actual picture of the human voice. But it was a mere laboratory experiment, and no one even dreamed that such a sound picture could be again transformed into speech - until the idea came to Thomas A. Edison with the suddenness of inspiration.

It was in 1877, long before Edison had become widely famous. At that time his experiments were carried on in a shop in Newark, New Jersey, where he was surrounded with a little company of trusted workmen. It was at the time when Edison often became so absorbed in his schemes for inventions that he forgot his meals, and frequently worked night and day for two or three days together, keeping all of those about him as busy as he was himself. Sometimes he would call in an organ-grinder to keep the men awake and cheerful until the

strain was over, and then he would hire a boat and take all hands down the bay with him on a fishing excursion. It was with this singleness of purpose and loyalty that Edison and his men always worked together.



EDISON'S FIRST PHONOGRAPH.

Not long ago I visited Edison's great laboratory at Orange, New Jersey, where more than seven hundred men are employed in coining the visions of the master's brain. I found Edison himself sitting in one of his characteristic positions, half leaning upon a table filled with drawings, his head on his hand and his fingers thrust through his hair. He told me briefly how he came to invent the phonograph, and his story was later much extended by John Ott, who was with him through all of the experiments.

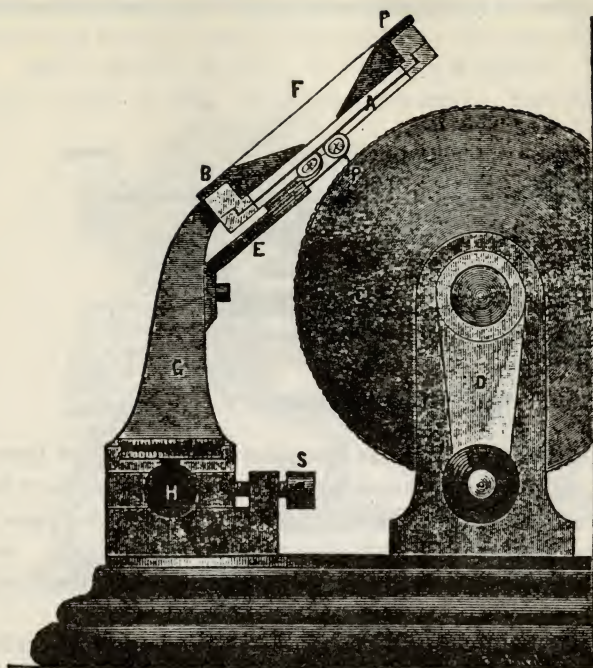
The inventor had been working during the early part of the year 1877 in developing and improving the telephone, inventing the transmitter which has since borne his name. This consisted of a disk of carbon, having a sharp-pointed pin on the back of it. He had noticed many times that when he spoke against the face of the disk the vibrations would cause the pin to prick his fingers or to indent any soft substances held near it. This was one fact; he carried it in mind, but it gave him no particular suggestion. It was, indeed, only a step beyond Scott's discovery.

Previous to this time Edison had invented a remarkable device for the automatic repetition of telegraph messages. It consisted of a simple apparatus by means of which the dots and dashes of the original message were recorded in a series of indentations on a long, narrow strip of paper. This record could be fed into a sending machine and the message re-transmitted without the service of an operator. In other words, Edison had made pictures on paper of the sounds communicated over the telegraph wires, thereby approaching the phonograph from another direction.

"In manipulating this machine," Edison wrote in 1888, "I found that when the cylinder carrying the indented paper was turned with great swiftness it gave off a humming noise from the indentations - a musical, rhythmic sound, resembling that of human talk heard indistinctly."

Here was another fact - unconnected as yet, but exceedingly important as pointing to the great discovery.

"I remember," John Ott told me, "that Edison had been working at his bench in the laboratory nearly all day, silent for the most part. Quite suddenly he jumped up and said with



CROSS SECTION OF EDISON'S FIRST PHONOGRAPH, SHOWING
METHOD OF OPERATION.

some excitement: 'By George, I can make a talking machine!' Then he sat down again and drew the designs of his proposed machine on a slip of yellow paper. I don't think it took him above ten minutes altogether."

On the margin of that design Edison marked "\$8", and handed it to his foreman, John Kruesi.

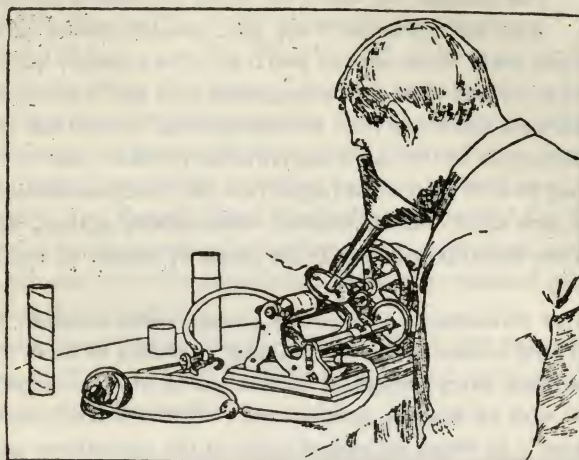
"My men all worked by the piece in those days," Mr. Edison told me, "and when I wanted a model made I always marked the price on it. In this case it was £8, I remember. Kruesi went to work at it the same day, and I think he had it completed within thirty-six hours. We used to try all sorts of things, and most of them were failures; so that I didn't expect much from the new model, at least at first, although I knew it was correct in principle".

But Kruesi fitted the tin-foil on the cylinder, and brought the machine to Mr. Edison. The inventor turned the handle and spoke into the mouthpiece;

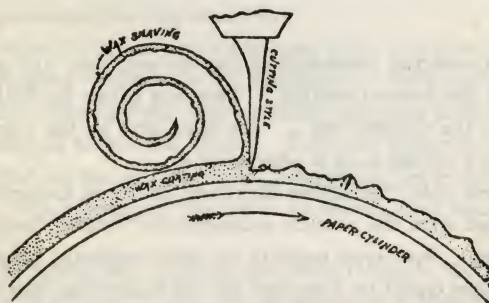
"Mary had a little lamb,
Its fleece was white as snow,
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb was sure to go".

Then he set the recorder back to the starting-place and began to turn the cylinder. At the very best he had not expected to hear more than a burring confusion of sounds, but to his astonishment and awe the machine began to repeat in a curious, metallic, distant voice:

"Mary had a little lamb....."



MAKING A RECORD ON ONE OF THE EARLY FORMS OF
THE GRAPHOPHONE.



SHOWING HOW THE RECORD IS ENGRAVED ON THE WAX
CYLINDER—MUCH ENLARGED.

And thus the first words ever spoken by a phonograph were the four simple lines of Mother Goose's melody. The idea had come to the inventor with a flash of inspiration, and the machine had proved its marvellous possibilities on the first trial. Few inventions ever have been conceived and carried to success so swiftly. Kruesi's eight-dollar machine, which could not now be bought for hundreds, is in the patent museum at South Kensington, London.

This first machine, although it talked, was a very crude affair compared with the all but perfect phonographs of to-day. In principle it was exceedingly simple. There was a diaphragm or membrane, having a sharp-pointed pin attached to its under surface. When sound waves, caused by a spoken word or a piece of music, struck this diaphragm, it vibrated, and the pin rose up and down. The cylinder on which the sound pictures or records were to be made was covered with tin-foil. At every vibration of the pin, indentations of various depths were made in this tin-foil. These little holes were so small as to be scarcely visible to the naked eye, but when the diaphragm was set back to the beginning and the cylinder was turned, the pin, travelling up and down over the rough road of indentations, caused the diaphragm to vibrate and give out the same sounds which had been previously spoken into it. A reference to the pictures on pages 23 and 24 will show clearly just how the machine worked. A is the plate or diaphragm, 1-100 of an inch thick, which vibrated when spoken against, driving the point P into the cylinder C. F is the mouthpiece, and D the crank by means of which the cylinder was turned.

Few inventions ever awakened a world-wide interest more suddenly than did this of the phonograph. When it was first exhibited in the "Tribune" building in New York, every scientific paper, every magazine, and every newspaper in this and in foreign countries gave accounts of the invention, and dealt with its dizzying possibilities. Edison himself wrote an article for the "North American Review", in which he told of some of the marvellous uses to which the machine would be put in the future.

REPORTS FROM THE MIDLAND AREA GROUP

MEETING held in the Y.M.C.A. Board Room, Westbury Street, Wolverhampton, Staffs. on Saturday, July 15th, 1972.

Our attendance at this meeting consisted of eleven regulars, and after the formalities had been completed, we began the formal recital. This was given by Phil Bennett and was entitled "Small Group Jazz from the Classic Era". We who prop up the jazz and dance corner of the Midland section had long awaited such a programme.

The recital commenced with "Darktown Strutters' Ball" on Columbia 2903 by the O.D.J.B. and this was contrasted with the version recorded by "Wilbur Sweatman's Original Jazz Band" some 16 months later. Both lean heavily on their ragtime, brass and novelty band predecessors, and at this stage one could be forgiven for not believing that jazz would eventually be considered an art form. We continued now with "Ted Lewis' Band" playing "O" introducing "The Vamp" (Col. 2977). Ted Lewis being a novelty instrumentalist himself, one is amazed that his band plays such good music. Next we heard "Lopez and Hamilton's Kings of Harmony Orchestra" on Edison 50662. Although recorded in 1920, the idea of hot solos and ensemble work is beginning to show, and with 4 minutes to play through the solos get a real chance to expand. The title was "Bluin' the Blues".

A genuine American record next appeared: "The Superior Jazz Band" on Bell P-144

playing "Virginia Blues". Phil informs me that the line-up for this record (made in April 1922) is that of an early Memphis Five. Next, another Edison disc, the "Stevens Trio" and "Teach Me How" (Ed. 51277) followed by some early British Jazz, "Oh Eva" by the "Finney Tribe" on Regal G8247. The sound from this record would seem very familiar to fans of the early Columbia Savoy Bands! Another record from the same year, 1924, was "Blue Blues" by the "Mound City Blue Blowers" recorded in London for Brunswick.

Representing 1926 we heard the "Red Heads" on Perfect 14568 with "Poor Papa" and moved on to 1927 with "Cushion Foot Stomp" by "Clarence Williams Washboard Band" (Parl. R3383). This excellent recording demonstrates not only the musicianship reached by this stage in jazz's development, but also the playing qualities which so few companies achieved in the late '20s even though electrical recording and good quality wax were available. Also on Parlophone we heard "Joe Venuti's Blue Four" playing "Beatin' the Dog" (R. 3367). This record and others made by the same and associated musicians must represent the climax of the development of classic jazz by white musicians, and yet is rendered obsolete by the advent of the swing rhythm section soon after.

From 1928 we heard "Louis Armstrong's Hot Five" and "West End Blues" (R. 448) and our last record, from 1932, was "Son" by "Red Pepper Sam" on Imperial 2825, featuring a youthful Larry Adler on 'hot' harmonica!

MEETING held in the Y.M.C.A. Board Room, Westbury St., Wolverhampton, on Saturday, November 18th, 1972.

About twelve members attended the November meeting of the Midland Group on Saturday Nov. 18th.

John Dales presented the programme which was entitled "The Development of The Edison Cylinder". John gave a brief outline of Edison company history and the early recording techniques involved, explaining that the word "dubbing" now in common use came from "doubling" as used in pantographic duplication.

The first cylinder that John played was an 1893 100 rpm U.S. Phonograph Co recording by George Gaskin singing "Climb Up Ye Children". Although John was using a magnificent example of an Edison Triumph the reproduction was very faint as cylinders of this vintage were designed to be listened to via ear tubes. This was followed by an 1897 recording of "The Village Blacksmith" by the Edison Grand Symphony Orch which played at 125 rpm. While this was playing John Displayed examples of Edison 5" Concert Cylinder (1903) and a Lioret cylinder of 1893.

An early "Gold Moulded" cylinder was Will Denny's "Is There Anything Else You Like" which played at 144 r.p.m. This was followed by a Harry Champion record of "Any Old Thing Will Do" which played at 160 r.p.m. From earthy comedy, we came to grand opera with Van Rouy singing O Du Mein Holder Hobstein on a 1906 Edison Grand Opera series recording. The recording quality was much improved on the previous cylinders and when issued, sold at the high price of 3/- but the series only lasted two years. Another operatic selection followed this time on a wax Amberol of 1908 by the then famous soprano Blanche Arral.

The programme then progressed to Blue Amberol recordings, the first of which was "Home Sweet Home - The World Over" by the Edison Military Band which dated from 1912. John's next offering dated from 1914 and was a most unusual Blue Amberol in that it featured a spoken announcement. The penultimate item dated from 1918 and was a recording by Anna Case (soprano) singing "Mon coeur Ne Pour Changer" from Mireille by Gounod. The final record of this most interesting recital was a hot dance tune of 1925 - "Follow the Swallow" by the Atlantic Dance Orchestra.

Forthcoming meetings: January 20th, Group AGM; March 17th; May 12th;
July 21st; September 29th; November 24th.

All meetings in the Board Room of the YMCA, Westbury St., Wolverhampton, at
7.30 p.m.

Hon. Group Secretary: Phil Bennett, [REDACTED] Wolverhampton, Staffs. WV4 5DE. Phone: [REDACTED]

ANOTHER VOICE FROM THE PAST

By David Williams

Mme. MELBA

Nellie Melba, Soprano, born of Scottish parents at Burnley near Melbourne. At an early age she showed signs that might have warned an observant mind of the talents that lay hidden, but in a brief sketch the story of early years, interesting though it may be, must be ignored, and bare facts only given.

In 1885 she finally determined on her choice of a profession, and after a tour in her native land Australia, and one recital at Prince's Hall in London, she went to Paris and became a pupil of Marchesi in 1886. In December of that year she first adopted the name of Melba, until then having used her married name (Mrs. Armstrong) at any concerts at which she sang.

Her first operatic appearance was in 1887 at the Theatre Monnaie in Brussels as Gilda in "Rigoletto", in which she was an instant success. In 1888 she made her Covent Garden debut as Lucia di Lammermoor. In 1889 she appeared at the Grand Opera, Paris, as Ophelie. In 1890 she was desired to appear at the Imperial Opera House, St. Petersburg, and on the same occasion visited Rubinstein, then old and in feeble health, and sang to him by his express wish. In 1893 she sang at La Scala, creating an almost unprecedented furore, and later in the same year she created the role of Nedda in "Pagliacci".

Since then the passing years have shown that Madame Melba has even more firmly consolidated her position as the first Soprano singer of her day, and a worthy wearer of the Imperial mantle borne by the empresses of song.



Canadian member, The Rev. Daniel Lee Bohline, painting a facsimile of Barraud's original HMV before he painted over the phonograph.

REGIONAL REPORT FROM MANCHESTER

The first meeting in 1973 was again held in the "Waggon and Horses", Southgate, Manchester, at 7.30 p.m. 3rd January.

There were fifteen members present to hear the recital given by Clive Thompson of Vocal Recordings which were played on a Gramophone Monarch model, which is thoroughly original in every detail.

The records played were as follows:-

John McCormack - "Salve Dimora" from "Faust".

Caruso & Scotti - "Ah Mimi tu piu" - "La Boheme".

Marcel Journet - "La Calunia" - "Barber of Seville".

Francesco Tamagno - "Death of Othello" - Verdi.

Frank Mullings & Norman Allin - Gendarmes Duet.

Frieda Hempel - Rossini's aria (in German) from the "Barber of Seville".

Galli-Curci - "Home Sweet Home".

Melba - Caruso - "Love Duet" - "La Boheme".

All the recordings came over very well indeed and the records were played with a thorn needle. Clive was given a warm round of applause for his presentation.

The organisers of the "Flea Market" venture at the Corn Exchange, Manchester, have kindly offered a free stall in which the Society may be advertised. A small exhibition is planned to attract would-be members and the stall will be manned by Manchester Branch volunteers.

During the meeting, one member suggested that the meetings should be held once a month, instead of bi-monthly. The Secretary put this to the vote and all agreed. This branch will therefore meet on the first Wednesday of the month, the next meeting being the 7th February, 1973, at the usual time and place, when Rodney Cliff will give a recital of Talking Records.

MEMBER HAROLD S. ANDERSON REPORTS :-

A programme of Edison Diamond Discs was presented at the Library and Museum of The Performing Arts, New York Public Library, on December 4th, 1972, sponsored by the Rogers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, to mark the 95th birthday of the phonograph, and 60th anniversary of the Diamond Disc, with Raymond Wile of Queen's College as the Speaker.

The programme, presented with the co-operation of The Edison National Historic Site, offered 16 heretofore unpublished recorded items by celebrated vocal artists of the past, including:-

Anselmi, Destinn, Jörn, Muzio, Elisabeth Schumann, Labia, Chalmers, Vergeri, Beddoe, Ciccolini, Le Fonenay, Virgilio Lazari, Matzenauer, Heinhaks, Carmen Melis, Emmy Leisner and Taurino Parvis.

An unusual aspect of the recordings was the excellent sound quality for the period at which they were done - a major reason for their not being issued was that the dynamic range was too wide for the pre-electric phonograph - a situation which does not apply with modern equipment.

Mr. Anderson adds that the records were mostly 12 inch discs recorded in Europe between 1910 and 1914, and are from the file of unreleased recordings at the Edison Laboratory.

THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

LONDON MEETING OF 13th January 1973.

John McKeown showed a nice knowledge of the records in his programme. We were reminded that 1973 is very much a gramophone year, with centenaries of the birth of Caruso, Chaliapin, Clara Butt, and others, even Fred Gaisberg arrived on January 1st, 1873, and he did as much as any man for the prosperity of the gramophone.

John McKeown made his programme up from mainly acoustic 78s, his first song being by John Harrison, Bishop's "Pilgrim of Love", the record dating from 1911. An Odeon of C.H. Workman followed, "A Private Buffoon" from "Yeomen of the Guard". Workman was apparently in the original production of "Utopia Limited", and played the principal comic roles in Gilbert's 1906 Savoy revivals; it was thought that Workman's song recordings from that opera on contemporary Odeons were the only ones until Decca's abridged "Utopia Limited" a few years ago.

Another record rarity is Costa's oratorio "Eli", from which we heard Eleanor Jones-Hudson sing "I will Extol Thee, O Lord"; it was thought that this was the only extract ever recorded. Clara Butt sung Elgar's "Where Corals Lie" on the next record; although Elgar dedicated "Sea Pictures" to her in 1899, this was the only piece from them she preserved for us. Two Yale Americans wrote "There's a Long Long Trail A-Winding" a year or two before World War I, and we heard the John McCormack version, rare in Britain as the Victor was not issued here on H.M.V. labels.

Joseph Lhevinne played Beethoven's "Eccossaises" on a Pathe Actuelle, and how clearly we could hear the master cylinder, but how bright was the piano tone. Peter Dawson took us to Balfe's "Siege of Rochelle" and Rosina Buckman and Walter Hyde pleased us with a duet from Wallace's "Maritana". At the age of 70 in 1926, Leslie Stuart recorded some of his own music on the piano. He was touring the music halls. Melba and John Brownlee reversed their ages to sing the parts of Violetta and Germont pere in the "Traviata" duet.

The death recently of Richard Crooks reminded us that he started recording at about 24 or 25 years of age, and his first record issued here was "Wee Little Home I Love", incidentally the first electric 'E' label HMV in this country.

We had started with a march on an early Dacapo disc, and we finished with Sousa's "Fairest of the Fair" on a 1926 HMV label. In between we had been given about ninety minutes of good entertainment and more information than can go into a short account.

President: Major H.H. Annand, [REDACTED], Hillingdon, Middlesex.
Vice-President & Vice-Chairman: Mr. G. Frow, [REDACTED], Sevenoaks, Kent.
Chairman: Mr. L. Watts, [REDACTED], Twickenham, Middlesex, TW2 5LS.
Hon. Secretary: Mr. W. Brott, [REDACTED], West Finchley, London N3 1PG.

TREASURER'S NOTES

In future, would members please send all monies, (cheques, P.Orders, etc.) direct to the Treasurer, together with all orders for goods, as this will simplify our accounting system, and avoid double handling. Receipts will be issued from the Treasurer, who will advise Len Watts of the orders, and members will be informed if any items are out of stock.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

U.K. and Europe	£1.25 per year
New Zealand Airmail	£2.20 per year
Australia, Japan, etc. (now payable directly to the Treasurer, as bulk subscription has ceased)	£2.20 per year
U.S.A. and Canada	5 dollars Surface Mail
	6 dollars Airmail

Overseas members are advised to send STERLING DRAFTS or banknotes, as check clearances here carry a high commission rate. The Society no longer operates within the Post Office Giro system.

New Zealand and Australian Postal Orders are acceptable in the U.K.

To save postage in mailing receipts, these are sent out with the goods or next magazine to members.

PLEASE MAKE OUT ALL CHECKS AND DRAFTS PAYABLE TO "THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH AND GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY".

Treasurer's Address: Mr. A.D. Besford, [REDACTED], Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, England.

The London Group meets during the Winter months on the second Saturday of each month at approximately 6 p.m. at "The John Snow" public house, in Broadwick Street, Soho, London, and in addition, regular meetings are held at the following centres:-

HEREFORD Details from the Secretary, Mr. D.G. Watson, [REDACTED], Tupsley, Hereford.

MIDLANDS Details from the Secretary, Mr. P. Bennett, [REDACTED], Goldthorn Park, Wolverhampton, Staffs, WV4 5DE. [REDACTED]

MANCHESTER Details from the Secretary? Mr. A.E. Hock, [REDACTED], Croston, Lancs.

VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA Details from the Secretary, Mr. A.W. Savery, [REDACTED], Reservoir, Victoria 3073, Australia.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND Details from the Secretary, Herr W. Schenker, [REDACTED], Zurich, Switzerland.

HILLDALE NEWS is published on behalf of THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY by Bill Brott, to whom all articles should be sent, and A. Besford, to whom all advertisements should be sent.

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ON

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At 6.45 p.m.

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Mr. JAMES VICKERS,

47, KNOWSLEY STREET, BOLTON.

TO-MORROW (Friday),

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Commencing 6.45 p.m.

